

*Mecklenburg County, North Carolina -  
Mecklenburg County Criminal Justice Advisory Group (CJAG)*

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*Mission Statement: “The Criminal Justice Advisory Group is committed to making a positive difference in the Mecklenburg County criminal justice system through communication, research, coordination, and planning. The group collaboratively develops programs and policies, and advocates change, in the interest of improving public safety.”*

*History: The Mecklenburg County Criminal Justice Advisory Group (CJAG) was created in 2005 as an informal forum where criminal justice system leaders engage in systemic planning and coordination. The CJAG focuses on identifying goals and priorities, developing solutions, and measuring results. Commitment is made to establishing cohesive policies and programs which are based on research and comprehensive planning. This commitment entails effective resource utilization and targeted funding strategies as part of its goal.*

*Coordinator: Tom Eberly (Criminal Justice Director)*

*Chair: Michelle Lancaster (County General Manager)*

*Year Created: 2005*

*Population: 913,639*

*Jurisdiction Represented: Mecklenburg County & the City of Charlotte*

*Funding Source(s): Mecklenburg County*

*Membership Agencies:*

- Senior Resident Superior Court Judge
- Chief District Judge
- Mecklenburg County Sheriff
- District Attorney
- Public Defender
- Director of Provided Mental Health Services
- Mecklenburg County Manager
- Charlotte City Manager
- Director of Child Support Enforcement
- Charlotte-Mecklenburg Police Chief
- 6 Town Police Chiefs in Mecklenburg County
- Clerk of Superior Court
- Trial Court Administrator
- Dept. of Community Corrections Judicial District Manager
- Chief Magistrate
- Director of Law Enforcement, Charlotte-Mecklenburg Schools

*Committees:*

- Justice in the Community/Justice Reinvestment
- Information Technology Governance

*Frequency of Meetings: Monthly*

*Number of Staff: CJAG initiatives are facilitated by the Criminal Justice Services, which has 5 staff members*

*Recent Accomplishments:*

- In April 2013, Mecklenburg County completed Phase I of Justice Reinvestment with technical assistance from the Bureau of Justice Assistance. The initiative revealed nearly 15 million dollars in potential cost savings through the implementation of alternative public safety strategies. The strategies identified by the CJAG focused on reducing low level arrests, diverting mentally ill and homeless from jail, and reintegrating prisoners into the community. Phase II is set to commence in July, 2013.
- In 2012, Charlotte-Mecklenburg coordinated a Criminal Justice Systems survey. All adults residing in Mecklenburg County were eligible to participate. The survey, containing a sample of 501 adults, queried perceptions of crime, views on criminal justice, perceptions of performance of the Mecklenburg County Criminal Justice System, viewpoints on arrests and citations, views of bail and release conditions, and views of sanctions.

- With federal and county funds, the CJAG is currently developing a data warehouse to capture statistical information from the arrest processing center, courts and detention facilities. Data from the warehouse will help inform key stakeholders about case volume and emerging trends. In addition, the project will include interactive web-based dashboards for residents to view aggregate data from the criminal justice system.

*Future Goals:* The CJAG plans to continue convening at monthly meetings to proactively address problems and issues through planning and coordination. Additionally, they plan to facilitate the collection of system-wide data to increase knowledge of the system and to improve decision-making, increase the use of innovative programs and policies to enhance criminal justice system functions and public safety, review criminal justice spending to seek cost-saving measures, and determine potential grant opportunities.

*Website:*

<http://charmeck.org/mecklenburg/county/CountyManagersOffice/CriminalJusticeServices/Pages/Default.aspx>